

# Flora takes charge of Virginia Army National Guard

Leadership of the Virginia Army National Guard transitioned from Brig. Gen. Walter L. Mercer to Brig. Gen. Lapthe C. Flora during a ceremony presided over by Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, July 14, 2018, at Defense Supply Center Richmond in Chesterfield County, Virginia. Mercer will retire after more than 35 years of military service, but he will continue to serve in a civilian position as the Chief Operating Officer for the Virginia Department of Military Affairs.

As the Assistant Adjutant General – Army, Flora leads the Virginia Army National Guard and provides mission readiness guidance in the areas of training, personnel management, command logistics, facilities and maintenance to support more 7,000 Army National Guard Citizen-Soldiers.

Flora serves as the Assistant Adjutant General – Army in a traditional National Guard status, and he will also be dual-hatted and serve as the new Deputy Commanding General for the U.S. Army Africa Headquarters in Vicenza, Italy. He will split his time between the two assignments.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/16/11740/>



**Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams presides over a ceremony marking the transition of leadership of the Virginia Army National Guard from Brig. Gen. Walter L. Mercer to Brig. Gen. Lapthe C. Flora July 14, 2018, in Chesterfield County, Virginia.**

## Virginia National Guard News Headlines

### Kadavy swears in new Soldiers during Twilight Tattoo

Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Kadavy, Director of the Army National Guard, administered an oath of enlistment to 56 new Soldiers gathered in Conmy Hall on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall July 18, 2018, before a Twilight Tattoo.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/25/11757/>

### VDF trains on security tasks, conducts commo exercise with CAP

The Virginia Defense Force conducted communications and security operations training July 13-15, 2018, at Fort Pickett, Virginia. The security training focused on a variety of access control scenarios, and the communications training featured a first-ever ground-to-air communications test with the Virginia Civil Air Patrol.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/18/11733/>

### Smith to succeed Johnson as Virginia Army National Guard's senior NCO

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Smith, Jr., will succeed Command Sgt. Maj. Cheyenne M. Johnson as the Virginia Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Major, according to an announcement made July 14, 2018.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/14/11737/>

### Gillis to command 329th Regional Support Group

Col. Doyle Gillis, Jr., will take command of the Virginia Beach-based 329th Regional Support Group from Col. K. Weedon Gallagher, according to an announcement made July 12, 2018.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/14/11739/>

## Did You Know?

### Fitness App Safe User Guide

Location-based fitness apps have made the news lately for endangering operational security and personal privacy. One app, Polar, shared information on 6,460 users from 69 countries and 208 sensitive locations like FBI offices, nuclear power plants and missile defense locations.

Read tips to protect yourself at

<https://go.usa.gov/xUE7q>.

# Virginia Air National Guard pilot wins national award

The U.S. Air Force announced the recipients of the 2017 Air Force Fighter Annual Awards in May 2018 at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Of the five recipients, Maj. "Mongo" Dietrich, 149th Fighter Squadron chief of weapons, was named the Air Force's Fighter Instructor Pilot of the Year.

Dietrich is the first F-22 Raptor pilot to receive this award. He is an instructor pilot in the 149th FS based out of Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. The squadron consists of about 50 members with about half being pilots.

"He is the perfect example of what the entire Virginia Air National Guard brings to the fight, both in garrison and around the world, during combat operations," said Col. Frank Lobash, 192nd Fighter Wing commander "We are key players in the success of our U.S. Air Force and execution of national security. From the maintainers that make the F-22 fly to the many support Airmen that make sure Dietrich is always ready to fly, it is a VaANG family effort."

As an instructor pilot, Dietrich trains pilots during scenarios and tasks. He also acts as a mentor during regular operations by providing feedback and advice on piloting the F-22. He is not the only instructor pilot in the 149th FS by far; every pilot in the squadron is an instructor pilot.

"I've been lucky my entire Air Force career to be surrounded by great people and exceptional instructors who've looked out for me, taken me under their wings and guided me through my time in the Air Force," said Dietrich as he reflected on what the award meant to him "I don't really see this award as an individual award. Every technique I've ever learned on how to instruct I learned from someone else."

The award is designed to recognize an instructor pilot's commitment, performance, leadership and aviation skills that were instrumental to mission success of their units, the USAF and the Department of Defense.

"Dietrich is a true superstar, and it's an honor to be able to work



**Maj. "Mongo" stands in front of the 149th Fighter Squadron flagship F-22 Raptor Nov. 17, 2017, at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. Mongo won the United States Air Force Instructor Pilot of the Year award for 2017.**

next to him each day as he continues to teach the next generation of fighter pilots how to do things right," said Lt. Col. Michael Schaner, 149th FS commander.

The award citation spoke to Dietrich's ingenuity which helped the USAF adapt to ever changing contingencies around the world.

"Honestly, I feel like a running back getting an MVP award, when we all know it's the offensive line, the coaching, schemes, game planning, practice team, QB calling audibles, wideouts/TE blocking, training staff and strength coaches that all contribute to the mission," said Dietrich.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/25/11767/>

## MORE ON THE WEB

### Joint military, law enforcement recruiting event held

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/21/11715/>

### Va. Army National Guard command selections announced

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/18/11753/>

### 329th officer graduates from Army War College class

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/07/18/11710/>

### 192nd Fighter Wing on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/192FighterWing/>

### 1030th Transportation Battalion on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/1030thTransportationBattalion/>

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**Lt. Gen. Mark C. Nowland, U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, hosts the 2017 Air Force Fighter Awards Ceremony at the Pentagon in Washington D.C., June 25, 2018.**